

**Minutes of:** **PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Date of Meeting:** 7 February 2011

**PRESENT:** Councillor Sandiford (Chair), Crawforth  
L Barnes, Lamb, Morris (substituting for Stansfield),  
Oakes, and Thorne

Irene Divine (Co-opted Member)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Liz Sandiford, Head of People and Policy  
Phil Seddon, Head of Finance and Property Services  
Mike Riley, Communities Manager  
Martin Kay, General Manager, Rossendale Leisure Trust  
Christine Ashcroft, CLAW  
Lynn Hurrell, Group Director of Assets, Green Vale Homes  
Amanda Gerrard, Group Director of Operations, Green Vale Homes  
Pat Couch, Scrutiny Support Officer  
Councillor Essex, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources  
Councillor Gledhill, Portfolio Holder for Leisure  
Councillor Aldred

1 member of the public

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Owing to delays with the traffic, Councillor L Barnes opened the meeting, until the Chair arrived.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Stansfield and Norman Hauserman, Chair, Rossendale Leisure Trust.

**2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

**Resolved:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2011 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**3. URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items for discussion.

**4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Morris declared a personal interest as he was on the Leisure Trust Board.

## **5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

The Chair agreed to deviate from the Procedure for Public Speaking and allow members of the public to ask questions as the reports were discussed.

## **6. CHAIR'S UPDATE**

Members were informed that Alder Grange Community and Technology School were holding an open evening on 15<sup>th</sup> February at 6.30pm and the Committee had received an invitation to attend.

An official opening would be held later in the year which the Council, along with the Mayor, would be invited to attend.

## **7. GREEN VALE HOMES**

Amanda Gerrard, Group Director of Operations and Lynn Hurrell, Group Director of Assets from Green Vale Homes delivered a presentation to the Committee.

The presentation focused on what was happening in housing and the changes that would affect Green Vale Homes, which included the Comprehensive Spending Review and the Emergency Budget which affects their tenants.

There was to be numerous changes to the way housing benefit would be paid in the future, with a 10% reduction. This would affect 1,000 tenants who would see a reduction of around £6.40 per week.

Green Vale Homes had a group looking at family profiles to see who would be affected by the changes and how they could be supported.

The Group Director of Operations gave a brief overview of the following:

- Universal Credit which would be established in 2013 and would provide one single pot of money instead of all the numerous benefits available at present.
- Social Housing Reform – looking at housing stock.
- Proposed merger with two other housing association groups – Prospect and Chevin Housing Group – called Together Housing Group.
- Number of improvements to homes – 2439 kitchens and 968 bathrooms.
- Results of a satisfaction survey, where overall satisfaction was 91%.

Members and the public present asked a number of questions to which the Officers from Green Vale Homes responded.

In relation to the number of 2621 people on the waiting lists for a property, a question was asked as to how many of these were from Rossendale and it was agreed that this information would be forwarded to the Scrutiny Officer for circulation to Members.

Concern was expressed that in the future housing benefit would be paid direct to the tenant instead of to the Housing Association. It was agreed by Members that this could lead to increases in arrears and ultimately in the eviction of vulnerable tenants. Amanda Gerrard agreed to provide the Scrutiny Officer with further information to include in the letter.

**Resolved:**

That the Chair thanked both Amanda Gerrard and Lynn Hurrell for their informative presentation.

**8. INTEGRATED PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 3 (October 2010 – December 2010)**

The Head of People and Policy presented the Quarter 3 Integrated Performance Report for October 2010 to December 2010. The report evidenced that currently 85% of actions identified within the Corporate Plan were on track to be delivered.

There was only one indicator that was not meeting its target which was LI 156 Buildings Accessible to People with a Disability and an explanation was provided on the decisions which could impact this indicator in the future.

The Head of People and Policy gave a brief overview of some positive performances within the report and Members commended the hard work of the staff involved.

In relation to 79a – Accuracy of Processing HB/CT claims, there had been an increase of 10.8% in their workload, which was the second highest in Lancashire. Further staff training was going ahead, and the Committee agreed to closely monitor the indicator at future meetings.

The Head of People and Policy indicated that with regard to Customer Standards, new Standards were being rolled out and looking at customer access points, and consulting with the public as to where they would like to see services available to them throughout the Borough.

A number of questions were raised to which the Head of People and Policy responded.

**Resolved:**

1. That the Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the level of performance detailed within the report.
2. That due to the positive news highlighted in the report, there was no request for Officers to attend the next meeting.
3. That the Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee continues to monitor performance of those indicators that are under-achieving targeted levels of performance.

## **9. LEISURE DEVELOPMENT**

The Communities Manager provided progress of the projects implemented as part of the 2009 Leisure Review, including funding agreements relating to Rossendale Leisure Trust (RLT) and Community Leisure Association Whitworth (CLAW).

An update was provided on each of the leisure development key projects as follows:

Ski Rossendale – At Cabinet in January it was agreed that the Ski Slopes would close on 31<sup>st</sup> March. Since that meeting there had been a lot of interest for the social enterprise option, but the Council had to take the revenue from the site by end March and ensure the site was secure. However, even if the site was mothballed, any expression of interest would still be followed through.

Haslingden Pool and Marl Pits Development – An open evening was held on 1<sup>st</sup> February and the public welcomed the opportunity to talk to the developers and work has been progressing between the Council, Leisure Trust, Mouchel and the developers (Kier Group). The internal and external design will be submitted to Development Control for full planning approval on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2011. The marketing strategy was well in hand.

There was a great deal of discussion around car parking both during the development and on completion. It was agreed that there was a need to maximise parking facilities on both sites.

The General Manager of the Leisure Trust informed Members that Kier were looking to keep disruption to a minimum. They were also working up travel plans for both facilities ie cycle to work. Other concerns in relation to parking were as follows:

- That contractors do not use the local area to park their cars and that the site manager had discussions with the contractors prior to work commencing. The Portfolio Holder for Leisure indicated that the Council were working closely with Kier regarding car parking and this formed part of the interview process.
- Concern that the recycling bins at the Sports Centre presented an eyesore at the entrance and should be re-sited away from public view.

- Consideration should be given to the future and the possibility of bringing swimming and other events into the Borough. There was a need to look at alternative nearby parking, with one suggestion being industrial areas.

A member of the public asked when the final plans would be available and also if the Council had looked at the possibility of wind/solar power. The Portfolio Holder confirmed that the final plans would be available on the website once published for the planning meeting and that he confirmed that Kier were looking into alternative power sources.

The Chair welcomed the quarterly performance report which provided Members with clear information on how the Leisure Trust was progressing.

In relation to Cardiac Rehab referrals, the General Manager indicated that the closure of Rossendale Hospital had impacted on the number of referrals for this programme, but they were working with local GPs to try to improve this.

The Chair asked about social prescriptions and whether this service was available. It was agreed that this be logged by the Scrutiny Support Officer as an item for discussion with the Rossendale Locality Commissioning Lead.

CLAW - The Communities Manager indicated that Globe Consultants had now completed their report which considered and tested a number of options.

The Board Member present at the meeting indicated that the report would be available to the public in 2 months and whilst they agreed with the options in principle, they would now need to come up with ideas to make the options workable. A meeting with the Council was due to be held soon.

It was agreed that the report would be brought to the next meeting in June.

The Board Member indicated that December saw a reduction in usage of the pool, and events at Whitworth Civic Hall had also reduced with one event being cancelled.

**Resolved:**

1. That the Committee note the work carried out so far in relation to the leisure projects.
2. That the Leisure Trust considers the re-siting of the recycling bins at the Sports Centre.

3. That the views of Members in relation to car parking facilities be taken into consideration.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm at finished at 9.10pm

Signed: .....  
**(Chair)**

Date: .....